

Emily Ferrara – Five Poems Feature



Monday Mornings to a ‘T’

I test my will to rise
the pillowcase smooth beneath my cheek.
Exhale. The next impulse
a sure misstep:

Stumble headlong into doing
shower, coffee, blow-dry, sext, brush, swish, my Jimmy Choo shoes:
Inhale.

Shock-jock clockwork, 6:58 a.m.
& counting:

Kenmore, Hynes, Copley, Ah-lington
Boylston, Pah-k Street, Downtown Crossing
Red line velocity, Spare Change trains:
Exhale.

Are-you-there-God? clockwork, 7:22 a.m. & counting:
Do you see these bodies blameless
and burdened with hope?

Inhale.

Lament for the Year Without Summer

Sun wobbling chaos
from trefoil trajectory, clouds
of continental lies swallow up
Earth's warmth and light.

The season's duplicitous turn
delivered crop-kill to barren fields.
Quixotic, The Book of Mormon,
red snow in Turin, skies alluring.

The Romantics set fire to Geneva,
birthed monsters to darken the ingress
100 years hence. In this Year Without Summer,
no rain, no sane, its only elixir, salvation.

What then will be birthed of this treacherous season?

The Sin-Eaters

We are your scapegoats, the needed
unwanted. We eat bread and ale
set over salt on the bodies of the departed.

We save souls for a sixpence, keep wandering
strays at bay. We are the undead
ensuring that your dead will stay dead.

We eat your sins with abandon—
wrath lust avarice sloth pride envy gluttony—
indefensible deleterious delectable delicious.

Ego Death at the Empty Rooftop Bar, Pod 39

Manhattan on the eve of Hurricane Sandy

There is no time to resist the urge to
drink the barkeep under the table, fling
cigarette embers into brittle air. Even
the moths take cover in shafts of mercy.

The crux of the matter is whether to choose
to imperil suffering, or suffer the bird's eye
Midtown view: dead but for cross-hatched
cabs and idle cruisers, empty of insomniacs.

Salute the Empire's spiny spire,
the silver Chrysler steeple loops,
ghostly twins towering, and once and for all—
freedom wrested from the tempest.

String Theory

Terse and pressed against a wall, we, all of us, travel by code,
troop through rooms where apples cook down thick on the stove,

where a lover's scent persists between flat and fitted sheets:
Destination den for a dog-lapped rest, attic for the keepsakes we keep.

In dreams we locate undiscovered finds: a stuffed armadillo
in the bedclothes, in the broiler my brilliant career. Love letters locked, no

key to find. Whispers of recognition, still so much unknown
Everyone is new in the looking glass, our cover is blown.

everything unknowable is known. We, all of us, search for the next toe-hold
Haven't we drunk the Koolaid? Our senses betray us. Or so we've been told.

Emily Ferrara is the author of *The Alchemy of Grief*, a poetry collection awarded the Bordighera Poetry Prize, and published in bilingual edition (English and Italian) in 2007. In 2015, her poetry was nominated for a Pushcart Prize, and she won the Frank O'Hara Prize from the Worcester County Poetry Association. Her work has appeared most recently in *Borderlands: Texas Poetry Review*, *Damfino*, *San Pedro River Review*, *MiPOesias*, *Poesy*, and *Worcester Review*. She lives in Worcester MA in a neighborhood where crows caucus, red-tailed hawks feed on unsuspecting squirrels, and a silver fox prowls at 3 a.m.